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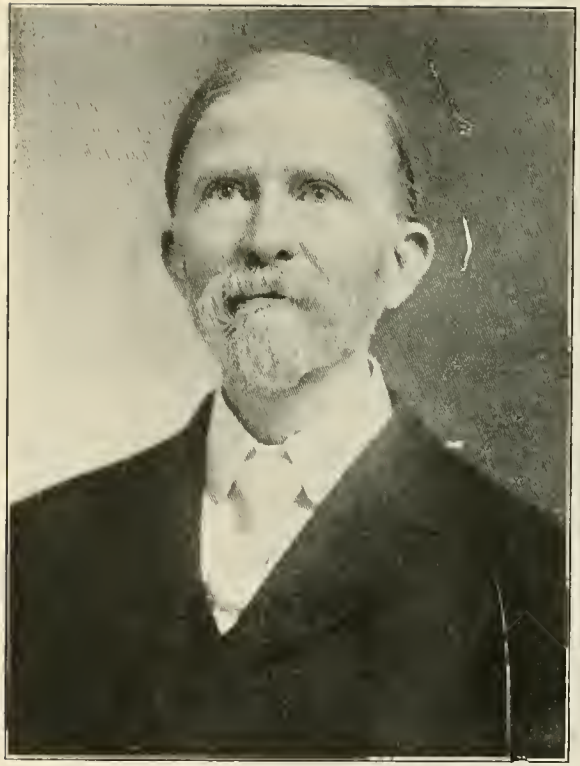
The Man of Galilee



M. J. Martin, M. D.

The Man of Galilee

A Story of the Life of Christ

BY

MARSHALL THOMAS MARTIN

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THIS LITTLE BOOKLET IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO MY WIFE, BELLE, AND TO MY TWO SONS, THEODORE AND THADDEUS, THE LATTER HAVING BEEN CALLED IN EARLY LIFE TO BE WITH THE MAN OF GALILEE.

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE

In earlier life, I wrote a poem similar in length and mechanical construction to this one, but the philosophy of the first was the antipodes of this in sentiment and religion.

At the time when the first was written, my mind was filled with the prevailing ideas of evolution, materialism and agnosticism.

However, my search for truth was with honesty of purpose, and, after spending many years in the vain endeavor to reach the goal by the path of reason, I learned that there is an avenue to knowledge as much superior to reason as reason is superior to instinct, and that avenue is FAITH.

Finally, I grasped the truth of God's personal existance, that He is a spirit, and that spiritual things can be discerned only by spiritual vision.

This poem was written in the firm belief that the foundation principles of christianity are absolutely true, and, however far the nominal church may have wandered from apostolic faith, it still holds the oracles of God, even though sometimes nearly smothered with a blanket of new thought and higher criticism.

Two objects have been in view while compiling this history of the Man of Galilee. The first was a desire to do something toward the evangelization of my fellow travellers on the road to eternity; and the second was to, in some measure, counteract the baneful influence of my previous poem.

This poem contains a double acrostic:—The first letter of each stanza spells John 3-16. The first letter of the last word in every stanza, beginning with the last and ending with the first spells 2nd Peter 3-3 and 4.

Truly,

M. T. M.

THE MAN OF GALILEE

Gloomy shadows filled the midnight, slowly wreathed in spiral bands;
Wreathed in silence, somber, solemn; rolled from Time's eternal strands;
Rolled from dark, penumbral oceans in the mystic realms of space;
From the black, nocturnal caverns holding night in their embrace;
From beyond the rays of sunlight, where the spirit dreads to peer;
From beyond the starlit regions, winding ebon shades draw Near.

2

O'er this sea of sable shadows came an astral angel bright,
Came from hills of beaming glory, from a land of life and light,
Came from shining spheres celestial where there reigns eternal day,
Where there are no sighs of sorrow, and the tears are dried away,
Came to bear a cheering message to the poor with pain distressed,
To the weak and heavy laden, to the weary and Oppressed.

3

Drawn by neither fear nor favor of the monarchs men call great,
Nor by all the regal splendor of the ancient Roman state,
And though destined for the country of the Hebrew's Holy Land,
It was not the sacred city with the temple, golden, grand,
But to Canaan's humblest hamlet where the common people dwelled,
Brought to Nazareth, the lowly, tidings heavenly love Impelled.

4

Sweetly, on the plainest pallet, dreaming, slept a spotless girl,
Who, of all the race of mortals, was the purest, peerless pearl,
Though a queen, she had no palace capped with sparkling, gilded dome,
But the modest, simple chamber of her cozy cottage home
Charmed that solemn, stately herald more than halls of grandeur's pride,
Seemed a beacon for his guidance while on Time's dark, earthly Tide.

5

On the angel's gentle entrance to that neatly kept abode.
All the furnishings so scanty, with a halo softly glowed,
And the sleeper's stainless features were illumined all the while
With an innocence so peaceful, with a mild and placid smile,
That it seemed an act unfriendly such a calm repose to break;
And the gracious seraph faltered ere the maid he should Awake.

6

Long he had not time to tarry in this land beneath the sun;
And his mission of vast import with reluctance was begun.
"Damsel, Mary," said the angel; and she started as he spoke,
Almost blinded by the brilliance, in extreme alarm she woke.
"Fear thou not, most blest of women, naught of harm can be thy fate."
"I am come to bring a message to redeem man's lost Estate."

7

"On the day by God appointed, thou shalt bear a holy child."
"He shall have most wondrous wisdom, and a disposition mild."
"He shall be the Son of David, and his father's throne ascend."
"He shall rule the house of Jacob, and his kingdom have no end."
"He shall be God's Son Anointed, and through him the earth be blest."
"Giving sinners free forgivness, and the righteous giving Rest."

8

Very meekly Mary answered, she would fain the duty shun,
That she feared her sinful nature, but the will of God be done.
Then the lustre all departed, and the darkness coming on
Filled her soul with strange forebodings. and bright Gabriel was gone.
But she strove her heart to quiet, to restrain the falling tear,
Till at last the dawning twilight brought her drooping spirits Cheer.

9

Early seeking faithful Joseph, earnestly did she portray
All the portents of her vision, and behests she must obey.
But the fear of his disfavor dimmed her eyes with crystal dew,
Filled her breast with doubt and sorrow, almost crushed her heart so true.
Yet he did not think of censure, nor an erring thought impute.
In each other's arms enfolded, hearts communed though lips were Mute.

10

During all the days which followed, happy was their quiet life.
In the humble home of Joseph, Mary was the loving wife.
They enjoyed the summer splendor, in their walks and moonlight views.
And they wandered in the woodlands, 'mid the autumn's golden hues.
But the days grew short and stormy, and, though knowing they were blest,
This great trust on them depending, oft their minds and hearts Oppressed.

11

Then from Rome it was commanded that the world should tribute bring.
So, to David's holy city, they repaired to pay the king.
As the evening shadows gathered, into Bethlehem they went;
But the taverns being taken, to a stable they were sent.
And, within those humble quarters, as the night began to wane,
There was born earth's only Savior, there began His endless Reign.

12

Here the shepherds found the infant. Here the wise men came from far;
Told by wondrous heavenly visions, guided by a flaming star.
Here they left their precious treasures and they bowed with one accord;
Kneeling by the manger - cradle, all the holy babe adored.
While the stable seemed a palace, and in golden lustre glowed,
As the rays of light celestial over all the people Flowed.

13

Ere the buoyant days of summer came an angel to impart
Warning of proud Herod's envy, and the murder in his heart.
So, in darkness, cold and danger, soon the Pharoah's land they gain,
While by Herod's bloody edict. all the other babes were slain.
But his reign was quickly over, and again the heavenly friend
Came to tell them of their safety, and the wicked monarch's End.

14

While within the days of childhood, He began His great career,
With the doctors in the temple, making all the Scriptures clear.
When he reached maturing manhood, choosing men devout and tried,
He commenced His life's grand mission, preaching on the mountain's side.
And the words which there were uttered, all the truths the Savior told,
Have been carelessly unheeded, and the world in sin has Rolled.

15

On the mountain's rugged bosom, thus the holy teacher spake:—
"Blessed are the poor and needy, who in faith their crusts partake,"
"Though they're clothed in ragged raiment, sheltered not from wind nor rain;"
"Yet they enter into glory, heaven's happy kingdom gain."
For the lack of gold and honor shows the vainness of their worth
And the weary soul looks upward, drawn to God, away from Earth.

16

"Richly blessed are the mourners, at their darling, loved ones' graves.
"For the Holy Spirit comforts, rescues them from sorrow's waves."
"Blessed are the meek and lowly, walking humbly with the Lord."
"All the earth shall they inherit, as their sure and great reward."
"Blessed are the ones who hunger, and for righteous living long."
"They shall realize their yearning and be kept from sin and Wrong."

17

"Largely blessed are the people who are merciful and kind.
"All through life and at the judgment they shall surely mercy find.
"And the pure in heart are blessed, those whose thoughts are never vile.
"They shall see Jehovah's glory, live in His approving smile.
"Blessed those who live in concord, where the olive branch appears.
"They shall be God's happy children, through the everlasting Years."

18

"Doubly blessed are the martyrs, those for righteousness oppressed.
"They shall live in heaven's kingdom, and forever be at rest.
"They are blessed in revilings, and in persecution's smart.
"Blessed when the tongue of evil hurls the falsehood's poisoned dart
"Be exceeding glad and joyful for the prophets shared this fate.
"Great is their reward in heaven, happy is their high Estate."

19

"Those who teach the ancient doctrine say that eye for eye must pay.
"But the good resist not evil, wrath draws not their hearts astray.
"When one cheek is sorely smitten, they the other meekly yield.
"If the coat by law is taken, still the cloak they will not shield.
"All their foes they love sincerely, cursings pay with blessings great.
"And they pray for those who injure, and who persecute and Hate."

20

"Have ye love but for the friendly, there is no reward above,
"Even publicans and sinners lavish love on those who love.
"Pardon ye your fellow mortals, and your sins will God erase.
"But the soul if unrelenting, ne'er can see the Father's face.
"Hearts which never harbor hatred, everlasting glories share,
"Pass through heaven's pearly portals, and their home is ever There."

21

"Add not earthly goods and treasures, strive not after worldly joy;
"For they cure no wound of sorrow, and the weary heart they cloy.
"All these joys take wings and vanish, wicked thieves break through and steal.
"Soon by moth and rust corroded, broken hearts they can not heal.
"But lay up your store in heaven, where no evil can dismay.
"For where'er is hid the treasure, there the heart will ever Stay.

22

"Thou canst never service render both to God and Mammon great.
"Strife for earthly wealth and pleasure surely closes heaven's gate.
"Therefore, think not of the morrow in regard to things of earth;
"Not for food nor drink nor raiment; these are but of little worth.
"Fix your thoughts on things eternal, seek the kingdom, heed the call;
"Strive to gain life everlasting, ere the shades of death Appall."

23

"How the birds rebuke the faithless, and in heaven's care confide.
"Though they neither sow nor harvest, yet the Father's stores provide.
"And consider well the lilies that they toil not in their glade;
"Yet in Solomon's great glory, he like one was not arrayed.
"Then if God so clothes the lilies, and supplies the sparrow's needs,
"For the fallen race of Adam, how His wondrous love Exceeds."

24

"Every judgment which ye render shall be meted back to thee;
"Therefore, judge no man his brother, but await the Lord's decree.
"Do not search the eyes of others for the microscopic motes;
"But remove the beam so massive which within thy vision floats.
"And in all things whatsoever ye would have men do to you,
"Do ye even so to others, both the faithful and Untrue."

25

"Go ye in the thorny pathway, enter through the narrow gate.
"For the road to life is hidden, and the door is small and strait;
"And though many strive to find it, only few can entrance gain.
"While the way to death is broader, and the gate is wide and plain;
"'Tis the path to fame and honor, wealth and fleeting pleasures bright;
"But it leads to woe and sorrow, and the gloom of endless Night."

26

"And whene'er to God thou prayest, be not filled with vain conceit,
"Like the hypocrites who worship standing in the church and street;
"For they love the praise of mortals more than sanction of the Lord;
"And by sowing to the carnal, they shall reap the same reward.
"But within thy closet kneeling, in sincerity of heart,
"Pray to God who hears in secret, and a blessing He'll Impart."

27

"Very humbly say, Our Father who art in the heaven above;
"Let thy name be hallowed ever; let thy kingdom come in love;
"Let thy will be done by mortals, as by those beyond the sun;
"Give us daily bread in kindness; pardon grant as we have done;
"Save us from the sore temptation; save from evil's dark design;
"And the kingdom and the power and the glory shall be Thine."

28

Ever preaching ever blessing, Jesus reached the little sea.
From a boat he taught the people, on the shores of Galilee.
And He likened his new kingdom to a farmer sowing seeds,
While an enemy, at midnight, strewed the field with noxious weeds,
Which the servants all were anxious to uproot without delay,
But he feared the wheat might suffer, so the Master's word was Nay.

29

Here must mingle good and evil, here the enemy and friend;
Here the tares and wheat must flourish till the harvest of the end.
Then he taught another lesson from the grain and fields so fair.
Seed fell in the beaten pathway which was siezed by fowls of air;
Some where earth was thin or lacking, and it withered on the stone;
Some amidst the thorns and briars, and by them was Overgrown.

30

Into good soil some was planted, and was blessed with sun and rain;
And abundantly it yielded many fold of golden grain.
When the word of heaven's kingdom falls upon a heedless heart,
It is like seed by the wayside, it is quenched by Satan's art.
When the truth comes to the thoughtless, it is seed on shallow ground;
Soon it grows and soon it withers, and that soul can ne'er be Crowned.

31

Seed among the thorns and thistles, shows the truth in busy life,
All the care of daily living, all ambition's reckless strife;
Reaching after things deceitful, after wealth and carnal joy,
Choke the germs of life eternal, and the soul at last destroy.
But the seed which brought forth richly, to repay the Master's toil,
Is the truth in hearts receptive, is the word in honest Soil.

32

Of the coming wondrous kingdom, still in parables He taught.
And He spoke of paltry pleasures, by the young so often sought,
Which, though joyous for the moment, they conceal a poisoned sting,
First so sweet and then so bitter, only poignant anguish bring.
Then He told a touching story of a youth so filled with pride
That he spurned his father's counsel, taking passion for his Guide.

33

Neither love of home nor mother could restrain his wayward feet,
But the distant city lured him with its glamour and deceit.
And he wasted all his fortune in debauchery and shame,
Till the swine were his companions, and he longed their food to claim.
Then he wended slowly homeward; and the aged father's eye
Knew his son's familiar movement ere his footsteps had drawn Nigh.

34

Long, so long, he had been looking, and he ran to meet his son.
In his loving arms he clasped him, and he kissed the wandering one.
Then in penitential anguish spake the weak and starving boy:—
"O, my father, I am weary of my madding search for joy.
"Oh! forgive my wayward folly, let me feel thy love once more;
"Let me be a hired servant. Father, take me I Implore."

35

Yearned that noble father's bosom for his broken hearted child;
And again he clasped him fondly, as benignantly he smiled.
Then he gave him costly raiment for the tatters which he wore;
And he made a joyous supper, old affections to restore.
Thus the Lord receives the sinner, when he ceases earth to roam,
When he comes to God in sorrow, there's a happy welcome Home.

36

Being bitterly derided by the Pharisees of wealth,
Who obtained their golden riches both by usury and stealth.
Just to show how love of money every higher impulse binds,
Christ this parable propounded, to impress their sordid minds:—
"There was once a mighty rich man, in apparel soft and rare.
"In his palace every comfort, every dainty viand There."

37

"Every morn without his gateway, came a leprous man for bread;
"Asking only for the refuse, only for the crumbs he pled;
"And the very dogs in pity came and licked his burning sores.
"Yet we hear him not complaining, but his Maker he adores,
"While the rich man in complaisance from his beaker calmly sips,
"Feeling that he made his millions and no thanks shall pass his Lips."

38

"Grieving for the hapless beggar, and the self-sufficient man,
"God sent both a sudden summons, ending thus life's little span.
"Then the poor man went to glory, but the rich man was in woe.
"And to Abraham in anguish called he from the realms below,
" 'Please send Lazarus with water for my tongue is parched and hot,
" 'In this flame I am in torment, pity my unhappy Lot.' "

39

"O'er the father's placid features passed a cloud of deep distress.
"And he said, 'My son remember how the Lord thy life didst bless;
"But thy days were filled with folly, thou didst feast in joy and mirth,
" 'Spurning messages from heaven, choosing sordid things of earth;
" 'And distinctly thou beholdest that this home of peace and bliss
" 'Is from there completely severed by a fathomless Abyss.' "

40

"Then, said Dives, 'O, my father, send thou Lazarus to tell
"'My five brothers of the torture of the fearful pangs of hell.'
"'But,' said Abraham most gently, ''tis impossible my son.
"'By the marvels of creation, God is known to every one.
"'If they will not heed the Scriptures, there is no strong arm to save;
"'They will never be persuaded, though one rose from out the Grave.'"

41

Thus the Savior taught the people both in figure and in fact,
And he also taught by wonders most mysterious to enact.
By a word, He healed the leper, and the paralytic man.
But a touch restored the vision that was lost when life began.
From five loaves and two small fishes, many thousands did He feed,
And each hungry soul found plenty to suppy his every Need.

42

Even those whose limbs were lacking were restored to perfect power.
By his word those at a distance were made whole that very hour.
One poor woman healed by Jesus was bowed down for eighteen years.
One but touched his holy garment, and was cured though filled with fears.
Walked He on the mighty billows, quelled the storm which men appalled.
Liberated minds in bondage, those by Satan's arts Inthralled.

43

Near the sea there was a graveyard, and from out it dismal gloom
Fiercely came a raving madman from a rocky cavern tomb.
None could bind with strongest fetters, quick he sundered heavy chains.
Through the day and dreary midnight, he would cry in doleful strains
As he wandered o'er the mountains, as he gashed his flesh with stones.
Ever rose despairing sobbing, ever echoed ghastly Moans.

44

Seeing Christ, the evil spirits did most sullenly entreat,
And besought Him most abjectly, cringing prostrate at His feet,
Not to banish them so early to the vast and fearful deep,
To the region where forever gibing demons wail and weep.
And they begged in piteous accents that the swine they might possess;
Knowing that they could no longer this poor lunatic Oppress.

45

On a hillside not far distant roamed the foul and brutish swine;
And the Lord allowed those spirits, for their punishment condign,
To invade those tainted creatures, when He drove them from the man.
And, at once the herd they entered, which in frantic madness ran
To the precipice so fearful, where the rolling billows swelled;
And they leaped to death most certain, by the demon power Compelled.

46

Now at Bethany were living three in Jesus' love secure.
These were Lazarus and Mary, also Martha, faithful, pure.
But there came a deadly sickness, and the brother's soul took flight.
And the desolate young sisters mourned alone in sorrow's night.
But though far away, the Master knew His friends were in despair.
And He hastened to their cottage that their anguish He might Share.

47

Then He offered them great comfort, saying, "Lazarus shall rise."
But the grandeur of His promise, neither maid could realize.
Yet they led Him to the graveyard, pointing out the sacred tomb,
And as tear drops fast were falling, 'mid the bitterness and gloom,
With His gracious face toward heaven, He implored with strong desire;
While with hope their hearts awaken, faith and confidence Inspire.

48

How they watch His every movement, gazing anxiously they stand.
There's a strange and awful silence, scarcely breathes the little band.
Suddenly, with voice of thunder, Jesus called upon the dead:—
"Lazarus, come forth," resounded through the sepulchre so dread.
And behold, with shroud enfolding, Lazarus at once appears.
In bewilderment they loose him, and their words of love he Hears.

49

After three long years of labor, anxious, care encumbered years,
Jesus found His work completed, saw the end of toil and tears.
He had taught the proud and lowly, He had preached both day and night.
He had healed the mind and body, He had made the darkness light.
He had freed from Satan's fetters, thousands who had long been bound.
He had sought the strayed and erring, many lost ones He had Found.

50

The disciples He had chosen, long had followed where He led;
Long had heard His words of wisdom, long on heavenly manna fed.
They had loved with strong devotion, they had shown most tender care.
They had tried with fond endeavor all His heavy griefs to share.
But among His friends so faithful, there was one with heart of stone.
He was cunning as a Serpent, Satan marked him for his Own.

51

When in gloom the night was curtained, Judas sought the wily priests;
And their furtive eyeballs glittered like the sly and savage beasts,
As he showed his plot so crafty to entrap the Son of Man.
And they listened, oh, so keenly, to his dark and dastard plan
To betray the Lord of Glory, to forsake and sell his friend;
Sell Him for the love of lucre, reckless of the bitter End.

52

He the Mount of Olives mentions as the place where Jesus prays.
And his guidance then he offers through the dark and winding ways,
If they'll give him golden talents; and a mighty sum he names.
But these artful, priestly bigots soon reduce his startling claims.
For they know his venal nature; and his shriveled soul they bought
With the selfsame thirty pieces as they purchased Him they Sought.

53

Over in the upper chamber, where the Passover was spread,
Jesus sat with His disciples, and the false friend dark and dread.
Then with voice so clear and solemn, Jesus slowly, sadly spake:—
"One of you, my dear beloved, one of you will undertake
"To His foes the Lord deliver, as with malice they pursue.
"And they shall, with little waiting, in His blood their hands Imbrue."

54

So aghast were the disciples, at this grave, imputed crime,
They were paralyzed a moment, and were speechless for a time.
And as slowly they recovered, drawing deep a bitter sigh,
Each one gasped in deathly whisper, "My dear Jesus, is it I?"
Even Judas, conscience stricken, clutching close his silver store,
"Is it I?" he feebly muttered. Then he fled and spoke no More.

55

Out he rushed to hide in darkness, and to seek the men of guile.
As the Lord made His last visit to the mount to pray a while.
Jesus chose the three most faithful, and then from the rest withdrew
To Gethsemane's dense garden where each flower and bird He knew.
Then He left the three together, and they sadly were distressed;
While He went a little farther for His soul was sore Oppressed.

56

Earnestly He asked the Father that the cup might pass Him by;
For upon Him like a mountain, all the sins of man piled high.
And this thought so overwhelming that He bore the whole world's guilt,
Freely from His pores outflowing, on the ground His blood was spilt.
But in all His bitter anguish, all his agonizing pain,
He repeated, "O, my Father, not my will but thine shall Reign."

57

Veiled in darkness, His disciples, when they could no longer weep,
In suspense and worn by sorrow, soon were overcome by sleep.
And when Jesus found them sleeping, He so gently asked them why
They had failed to watch one hour, when His time had drawn so nigh.
For He knew their great exhaustion, that no more they could endure.
And He knew their hearts so loving, that they were all true and Pure.

58

Evil men were now upon them, and with stave and sword and shout,
Swung their torches in the midnight, throwing lurid beams about,
And the captain was this Judas, who had been with Christ so long,
Whom the Lord had oft befriended, even he led on this throng.
And the fitful, murky glaring, showed his ghastly, deathlike face,
Which could never be forgotten, nor the hand of Time Erase.

59

Ruled by covetous desire, spurred by men in priestly sway,
Judas staggered in the vanguard, as he slowly led the way.
Till, at last, they reached the Savior with His faithful little band.
And, in fearful desperation, Judas seized his Master's hand,
And, by preconcerted signal, then a kiss he did impart.
And that kiss of his betrayal sorely rent the Savior's Heart.

60

Barely was the token given when the mob on Jesus fell;
And, with gibe and jeer and cursing, dragged Him to a prison cell.
Then, in fear, His friends forsook Him, feeling all was overthrown.
With the savage horde, they left Him, left to bear the load alone.
Yet, a long way off, there followed two of those whom best He knew;
And they went with him to judgment, striving ever to be True.

61

Eagerly, the rabble hasting, soon to Caiphas they came;
Where the Sanhedrin with malice had prejudged, and sealed its shame.
Witnesses, by subornation testified before the court;
But their falsehoods were conflicting and the charge did not support.
And, at last, two men came swearing that this fellow did proclaim
How He could destroy the temple, and, in three days, build the Same.

62

Leaping to his feet in anger, Caiphas to Jesus spake:—
"Hearest thou this testimony? Now what answer canst thou make?"
But the Lord remained in silence; like a lamb He was as dumb.
Then the high priest spoke with rancor, by his passion overcome:—
"I adjure thee, by Jehovah; for thy life thou now must plead.
"Art thou Son of God most truly, verily the Christ Indeed?"

63

In a calm voice, Jesus answered, "Honored ruler, thou has said."
"And I say to you, hereafter, when my Father calls the dead,
"Ye the Son of Man shall witness, as He sits at God's right hand,
"Clothed with majesty and power, when for judgment thou shalt stand.
"When He comes in clouds and glory, thou shalt then His face behold.
"As the things of earth are fading, and the shades of death Enfold."

64

Even while the Lord was speaking, Caiphas grew dark with rage.
And he paced the council chamber, like a tiger in his cage.
Then he tore his clothes in fury, and with grating voice he yelled:—
"Ye have heard this man blaspheming, surely now His doom is knelled.
"He may claim to be a monarch, and the name of God profane,
" But we'll end his life of boasting, and cut short His royal Reign."

65

Vengeance in his eyes was gleaming, as he looked the council o'er.
And he said, "What think ye, elders? Do we need a witness more?"
And the Sanhedrin, not waiting, in almost the selfsame breath,
Voted Christ a vile blasphemer, and condemned Him unto death.
Then forthwith His eyes they covered, and they struck Him without shame.
"Prophesy, who smote thee, Jesus?" did they tauntingly Exclaim.

66

Evil swayed those haughty judges; they harangued with voices loud;
Striving to engender venom in the surging, motley crowd.
Spurning mercy, right and justice, gave they Jesus to the gang;
And their curses and reviling in the darkness coarsely rang;
While with buffeting and scoffing, they were laughing at His fate,
Even spitting on the Savior in their unrelenting Hate.

67

Then did Peter by the fire, long to fight the crowd alone.
In the garden he already had his honest valor shown.
Though he had a willing spirit, yet his mortal flesh was weak.
So he quailed before a maiden, and against his Lord did speak.
Thrice, in fear, he made denial, then, without in darkness crept,
And upon the damp earth sinking, there most bitterly he Wept.

68

Having learned of all this madness, and the Sanhedrin's decree,
Then was Judas conscience stricken, as the end he could foresee.
He discerned the tragic ruin which his love of gold had wrought.
So he fled upon the mountains, but he could not banish thought.
Though he quaffed the flowing goblet, more distinctly glared his doom.
And upon his soul descended a most hopeless, deadly Gloom.

69

He retraced his weary footsteps. and before the elders came;
Where with broken words and tremor, he confessed his sin and shame;
That he sold the King of Glory, and a spotless soul betrayed.
But they only smiled austerely, as he trembled sore dismayed.
And they said in cold derision, "We have paid for what we bought."
"Thou must settle with thy conscience, and thy tears avail thee Naught."

70

In his eyes for just a moment was a glittering of hate.
But his heart had lost its courage, nothing could exasperate.
And the taunting words they uttered moved not one with horror crazed.
Vacantly he viewed the council, for his sluggish brain was dazed.
Bitter whisperings of conscience, which could nevermore be quelled,
Called to mind his lust for luere, and how Satan's wiles Impelled.

71

Making one strong, final effort to restore his mental reign,
Down he dashed the bribing silver, which was his eternal bane.
From the palace then he tottered, in remorse and awful dread.
On the rocks he fell, while hanging, and they found him bruised and dead.
His despair arouses pity, but there fall for him no tears.
And of him we'll know more clearly, in the future endless Years.

72

Sated with their fiendish torment, while the dawning day delayed.
All the people hurried Jesus to the Roman chief's arcade.
There they found great Pontius Pilate, high upon the judgment seat.
And to him they came demanding, he their verdict should complete.
And they made false accusations, with an unrelenting zeal,
While the diplomat most shrewdly listened to their base Appeal.

73

How the human heart endeavors good and evil to combine,
Striving strenuously ever, God with mammon to enshrine.
So this tactful politician, generous in mind and heart,
Whose religion was but pagan, thought to play a noble part.
Jesus now looked worn and haggard. He appeared a simple slave.
Pilate thought him but a peasant, still he longed the man to Save.

74

Other motives swayed the prefect:—He was not approved at home.
It was known among the people that he stood not well at Rome.
Therefore, now, to check the rumors and to calm the public mind,
He would fain appease his foemen even though to justice blind.
So, between the dark Charybdis and cold Scylla's rocky mail,
It was now his constant labor his official bark to Sail.

75

Urged by these opposing forces, Pilate's path was hard to tread.
And he greatly feared the outcome, should his steps be now misled.
Cautiously he questioned Jesus of His life and work and aim.
Asked him of this grave indictment, of His birth and whence He came.
And he found that Jesus truly spake as man ne'er spake before.
And resolved that he most surely would His liberty Restore.

76

Lying elders said that Jesus stood for every evil thing.
He incited insurrection; strove to make himself a king.
And so Pilate asked the question, "Art thou then a king indeed?"
Jesus answered him. "Thou sayest. I all monarchs supersede."
"But my kingdom is not earthly, else my friends their love had shown
"By the strength the Father giveth, and would then their Lord Enthrone."

77

During this examination, from the people Pilate learned
Jesus was a Galilean, and a chance he now discerned
To divide this troublous duty with the Tetrarch of the realm.
Fearing riots now might haply his ambition overwhelm.
So he sent the Lord to Herod, in the further hope to end
The vexatious feud existing, and regain his old time Friend.

78

Now when Herod saw that Pilate would fraternal bonds renew,
He displayed exceeding gladness; and he also wished to view
The peculiar man so mighty; He who calmed the raging storm;
Who revived the dead and dying, must some wonder now perform.
All his latent, occult power soon this anxious king would see.
Christ would certainly exhibit all his magic to be Free.

79

Oh, how blind was Herod's wisdom, overweening his conceit.
All his boasting was a shadow, all his cunning met defeat.
Jesus never worked for glory, never strove for paltry gain.
Never sought for earthly honor, never did His gift profane.
So, the king received no answer, and no miracle he saw.
All his railing did not frighten, nor his grandeur Overawe.

80

Then was Herod roused to ire, and he jeered and cursed the Lord.
And his generals and captains also insults did accord.
Then in gorgeous robes and scepter, they arrayed the Prince of Peace.
While they knelt in mock obeisance, and harrassed without surcease.
And they led Him back to Pilate, still upon the judgment seat.
Roman and Idumean greeted, and their friendship was Complete.

81

Pilate's wife now sent a message, as the trial just began,
Saying:—"See that thou do nothing with that just and righteous man,
"For my mind is deeply troubled by a vision his day seen."
But the governor was silent, and he sat with solemn mien.
He would gladly free the captive, if he only could be sure
By that diplomatic action he would make his place Secure.

82

Every year, it was his custom to compose the public mind,
By the pardon of some convict of the Jews, in chains confined.
So he asked the gathered people to accept of Christ's reprieve.
But they called for one, Barabbas, and the Lord would not receive.
And they cried aloud, "Not Jesus, but Barabbas we shall claim."
Now, Barabbas was a robber, and his heart was black with Shame.

83

Rising up before the people, Pilate asked in soothing tone,
"What will ye then do with Jesus, whom as Lord and King ye own?"
Then they raised a mighty tumult, crying out:—"Away with Him,"
"Crucify Him, crucify Him," while they looked so dark and grim,
Even Pilate feared for safety, but he still the Lord would shield,
Though his will commenced to waver, and he felt that he must Yield.

84

In the midst of all this uproar, Pilate sought their wrath to shun.
And he queried very gently, "Why, what evil hath he done?"
And they said, "Our law most holy, He has ever basely trod;
"And with blasphemy He claimeth that He is the Son of God."
Now, when Pilate heard that saying, heavy on his soul it weighed;
And the more the words he pondered, yet the more he was Afraid.

85

So he questioned Christ with caution. And he asked:—"From whence art thou?"
But no answer came from Jesus; and then dark grew Pilate's brow.
And he said with rising passion, "Knowest thou. I can release?"
"Or can crucify according to these cries which now increase?"
Jesus spoke so calmly, gently, "Only God canst thee endue."
"And without the strength from heaven, thou against me nought could Do."

86

Hearing words like these touched Pilate, and he longed to set Him free.
He besaught the priests most kindly to reverse their hard decree.
But they cried with greater venom, "Then art thou not Caesar's friend."
"If this man thou dost unshackle, then thy days of rule shall end."
"Whoso aids in insurrection,we in loyalty disown,"
"As he cunningly devises subtle schemes to gain the Throne."

87

Baleful were these words defiant. Pilate's heart began to quail.
After all his earnest effort, now it seemed that he must fail.
So he brought the Savior forward, saying, "Men, behold your King."
But they roared for crucifiction; and their angry shouts did ring:—
"We will have no king but Caesar." "Jesus must be crucified."
While proud Pilate paced the forum to and fro with heavy Stride.

88

Urged by every selfish motive human cunning could present,
Pilate was at last persuaded, he the crime could not prevent.
So, he washed his hands in token of his blamelessness therein.
Saying, "If ye slay this worthy, I am guiltless of your sin."
"I am clear of this man's murder, but on you it must devolve."
"See ye to this monstrous matter, also me ye must Absolve."

89

Then was all the fiendish fury of the throng at once unchained.
All their brutal, rankling malice surged like billows unrestrained.
While they gnashed their teeth in passion, and their words both hoarse and loud
Rose above the roar cyclonic, calling curses to enshroud;
Crying, "We absolve the prefect." "Christ for life now vainly strives."
"May His blood be on us ever, ever on our children's Lives."

90

Here the guards released Barabbas, and a joyous tidal wave
Rolled, as all the gathered people a most royal welcome gave.
Then the soldiers seized the Savior, and they stripped Him of his clothes;
Dressing Him in kingly purple, with buffoonery and oaths.
They deridingly gave homage, while the uproar was renewed.
And, with no restraining power, every villany Ensued.

91

And a crown of thorns they platted, which they pressed upon His head.
Till adown his face so pallid coursed the precious blood He shed.
As a mimic royal scepter, in His hand they placed a reed.
Then, in mocking adoration, each strove others to exceed.
Crying, "O, thou mighty monarch thy vast kingdom must prevail."
"Hail to thee, the Jew's Anointed," "Hail, thou royal king, all Hail."

92

Vicious men, though hardly human, moved by instincts vile and base,
Showed the most Satanic rancor, spitting in the Savior's face.
Then they took his puppet scepter, and they smote Him o'er and o'er.
Saying, "Prophesy, thou prophet, who did smite thee, we implore?"
Then they changed the purple garment, and restored to Him His own.
And, as time for death drew nearer, babel hushed to quiet Tone.

93

Every man in that vast concourse felt a weight of dread at last.
Many souls had honest longings to undo the fearful past.
But too late came their repentence, for the king had set his seal.
Unjust sentence had been rendered, and there now was no appeal.
So, they led away the Master to the place where He must die.
And among the many thousands, not one faithful friend was Nigh.

94

Ever since the days of Eden, Innocence, throughout all time
Has been made a spotless victim, sacrificed to heinous crime.
But of all the frightful horrors, strown along the wake of years,
Nothing is so soul-appalling; naught so stirs the heart to tears
As this tragedy of Jesus, which enwrapped the race in gloom.
But, thank God, it brought the sunshine, and it may each heart Illume.

95

Vainly conscience warned the people. Swiftly changed their fickle moods.
When the thirst for blood is craving, 'tis not long the mentor broods.
And the cross the soldiers builded, stirred again the vice innate;
And the love of strong excitement woke once more unsated hate.
So, to Golgotha they hasted, with the cross on Jesus laid.
And He toiled 'mid taunts and railing which he sought not to Evade.

96

Every moment bending lower,'neath the heavy load He bore;
Worn by woe and all night torment; bleeding from the scourging sore;
Cut by lictor's plying lashes, as they urged a faster pace;
And the blood from thorn-pricks blinding, as it trickled down His face;
Torn by thoughts of friends forsaking; left by them to die alone;
Jesus sank down by the roadside, with a smothered, mournful Moan.

97

Roughly then they seized a stranger, forcing him the cross to bear.
Then they drove the Savior fiercely, and the whip-thongs did not spare.
Till they reached the fatal hill-top where the final crime was wrought.
Where were slain the vilest convicts, here the Son of Man was brought,
Brought to suffer with the wicked, with no care nor mercy shown.
And no champion came forward, who his friendship now would Own.

98

Little did their comprehension grasp the vastness of this sin.
But with haste both harsh and heartless, they were eager to begin.
On the ground the cross was lying, and they hurried Jesus there.
Stretched Him on the frame so fiercely; all his body bruised and bare.
And, without remorse or pity, through His tender hands and feet
Driving spikes so large and cruel, made their fiendish work Complete.

99

As those soldiers all were Romans, knowing not the narrow way,
Jesus showed His loving nature, in His prayer for them that day.
Hardly were the great nails driven, as the blood gushed out anew,
He implored, "Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do."
But they pressed on with their purpose, and on Calvary's bare height,
They upraised this tree of torture to destroy earth's Life and Light.

100

Scarcely was this horror finished, when two crosses more they reared.
One on either side of Jesus, and on each a thief appeared.
Then the priests, while Christ was dying with the agonizing pain,
Wagged their heads and asked with laughter, when would come His kingly reign.
Saying, "If thou art Messiah. prove it now, a sure sign give;"
"Do this miracle convincing, leave the cross, come down and Live."

101

Then one malefactor railing, said, "Yes, save thyself and us."
But the other answered, saying, "We but justly suffer thus,"
"While this Friend hath done no evil." Then to Jesus turned his head:—
"Lord, I beg thee to remember my poor soul when I am dead."
Then the dying Savior whispered from his heart still full of love:—
"Truly thou to-day shalt meet me in the paradise Above."

102

In the brightness of the noonday, sudden darkness covered all;
And it rested three long hours like a sad and sable pall.
Then the Savior's pain and sorrow reached the climax of degree,
When He cried, "My God and Father, why hast thou forsaken me?"
Then He murmured, "It is finished," with His eyes toward heaven's dome.
"Father, take my weary spirit." And the Father took Him Home.

103

Now, a mighty earthquake coming, rent the temple's veil in twain.
And, the place most holy opened, we the mercy seat may gain.
Then a soldier bold and hardened, made a spear-thrust throngh His heart.
But the torn and mangled body felt no longer pain nor smart.
Then His friends at last came forward, dared to claim the dear remains.
Laid Him in a tomb just finished, free from blemishes and Stains.

104

Gloom surrounded the disciples. All their hopes were dashed away.
Quietly their tears were falling, when at night they met to pray.
But, on Sunday morning early, eagerly did Mary shout:—
"Oh, the Lord, the Lord has risen. Come and see. No longer doubt."
And they saw the Great Redeemer, saw the prints of nails and spear.
And these scars with untold power did the Lord to them Endear.

105

Leaving them these things to ponder, Jesus vanished from their view.
Yet, for days, He came to strengthen, and their faith and hope renew.
But there came the time of parting, when the Lord must take His flight.
And, though present in the Spirit, would be lost to mortal sight.
So, He took upon a mountain, the disciples whom He chose.
And a blessing on them breathing, in a shining cloud He Rose.

106

Into heaven they were peering, when two angles came as men.
And they said, "Why stand ye gazing?" "This same Christ shall come again."
"In the clouds, ye saw Him going, even so shall He return."
"As He bade, be always watching, for His coming ever yearn."
"Golden mansions are in waiting, which He promised long before."
"He is coming for His children, who will praise Him Evermore."

107

Faithful Friend, Our Lord and Savior, in thy sacrifice we trust.
Watch our wayward, trembling footsteps, O, remember we are dust.
Lead us by thy hand so loving, for the path is dark and cold.
We are torn and bruised from falling; in thy tender arms enfold.
We are often sad and weary, as upon the earth we roam.
Make us clean and pure and spotless, ready for the call, "Come Home."

108

Even now, when clouds are riven, gleams of glory come to view;
Scintillating rays of beauty from the home beyond the blue.
Where no night of death appalls us, neither pain nor haunting fears.
Thou shalt be the Light effulgent. Thou shalt wipe away all tears.
Thou shalt have the praise eternal. Thou shalt guard and keep thine own.
Thou hast given us salvation. Thou shalt occupy the Throne.

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